

Higher Education Funding Council for England

Title	Intended use of impact case studies submitted to the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014)
To	Heads of UK higher education institutions submitting to REF 2014
Of interest to those responsible for	Research Excellence Framework
Reference	Circular letter 26/2014
Publication date	12 August 2014
Enquiries to	Anna Dickinson, tel 0117 931 7477, e-mail info@ref.ac.uk

Dear Vice-Chancellor or Principal

Intended use of impact case studies submitted to the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014)

1. I am writing to inform you that we intend to allow limited early access to enable analysis of the impact case studies submitted to the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014).
2. All institutions that submitted to the REF provided impact case studies as part of their submissions. These will be published alongside other REF submissions data at the end of the exercise; we currently expect this to be in early 2015.
3. The case studies contain a wealth of evidence concerning the benefits that result from research in UK higher education institutions. HEFCE, on behalf of the four UK funding bodies, intends to release the REF impact case studies to third parties before 2015, on a strictly confidential basis, for further analysis.
4. HEFCE is commissioning work to analyse the impact case studies for evidence of impact at a sector-wide level. The case studies will be released to the successful contractor to undertake this analysis, and also to produce a freely available online database of case studies that will allow additional analysis and automated text mining. This is an additional format in which the REF case studies will be publicly available, beyond that published as part of the REF submissions data. This database will not be published until the REF submissions themselves have been published.
5. We also intend to release the case studies to a number of Research Councils, which wish to analyse the case studies relevant to their particular remits.
6. The release of all data will be subject to appropriate confidentiality arrangements, and third parties will not have access to any further assessment information or interim REF scores. The impact case studies will only be made available to the third parties for

the purposes described above. The outcomes of any analyses will not be published until the submissions data have been published in early 2015.

7. Only impact case studies that will later be published as part of the REF submissions data will be released. Impact case studies marked by institutions as 'not for publication' will not be released. We will only release the redacted versions of those case studies flagged by an institution as requiring redaction.

8. HEFCE considers that sector-level analysis of the REF impact case studies will be of great benefit to the higher education sector as a whole, and provide valuable information to demonstrate the range of impacts of its research.

9. If you have any further questions, please e-mail us on info@ref.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

David Sweeney

Director